



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 30 January 1968



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DAILY BRIEF
30 JANUARY 1968

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2. South Vietnam
(as of 5:30 AM
EST)

Sharp fighting reportedly continues in the cities of Pleiku, Kon-tum, Da Nang, and Nha Trang. Information is still sketchy on what is happening around the other cities and bases hit by the well-coordinated and unprecedented Communist offensive.

Designed for maximum psychological impact, the Communists concentrated on showing they could shoot their way into major populated areas, particularly provincial capitals.

Hanoi is already trying to shift the blame for these blatant truce violations onto the allies. A broadcast this morning charged the US and South Vietnam had cancelled the cease-fire and then launched heavy attacks on the civilian populace.

So far, there are no new reports of fighting in the area around Khe Sanh.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

Special Daily Report on North Vietnam



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Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only

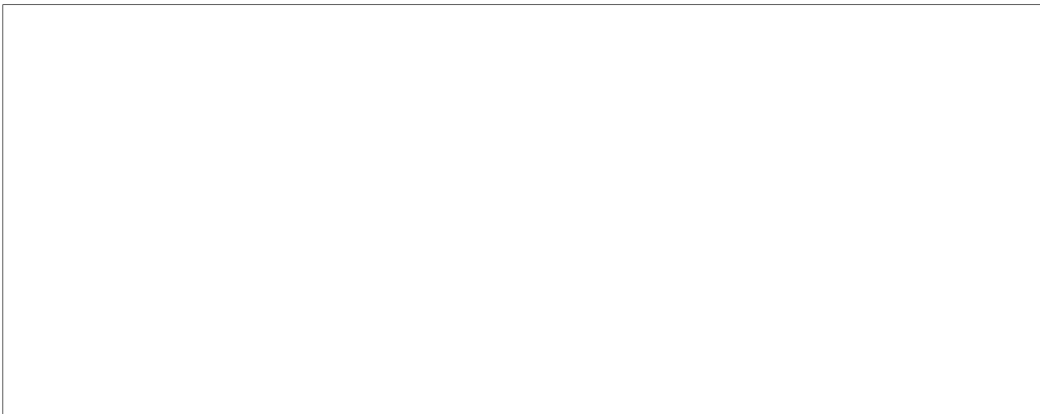
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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION



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Hanoi Continues to Manage News Stories Sent
Abroad: North Vietnam is continuing its efforts to
ensure that stories filed by resident foreign corre-
spondents in Hanoi stick to official guidelines when

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discussing regime policy toward talks with the United States.

A recent dispatch by Joseph Cabanes, the French news agency correspondent in Hanoi, commenting that the US had not yet responded to Foreign Minister Trinh's statement, was inspired and cleared by the North Vietnamese, according to the French Foreign Office. Cabanes was told by North Vietnamese officials that no story which has come out of Hanoi since the Trinh statement should be interpreted as a hardening of Hanoi's position. The officials also requested that he delete a reference to a recent statement on the question of talks by the North Vietnamese representative in Rangoon because it might be erroneously interpreted as a hardening of Hanoi's position.

Hanoi's sensitivity to interpretation of the Trinh statement, which has also affected the Czech correspondent there, may be partially responsible for the regime's refusal during the last several weeks to allow any new correspondents into the country. Even Wilfred Burchett, a frequent apologist for Hanoi, and often a vehicle for Communist propaganda, has been unsuccessful in a recent attempt to get into North Vietnam to obtain material on the issue of talks with the US. Other Western correspondents who have sought visas or information about the Trinh statement have been referred to the 29 December formulation or to a 16 January statement by the North Vietnamese mission in Paris, both of which Hanoi has authorized as official.

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Liberation Front Comments on Pueblo: In a broadcast on 26 January the Liberation Front offered its initial comment on the seizure of the Pueblo. The broadcast praised the North Koreans for striking "punitive blows against the US" in defending their sovereignty. In keeping with Hanoi propaganda, the broadcast claimed that the Pueblo incident was only the latest in a series of US violations of North Korean territory and voiced the Front's full support for the Korean position. The broadcast also stated that the Front and the North Koreans share the same battlefield against the "US imperialists." It claimed

that the "US imperialists will be completely defeated more rapidly in Vietnam if they dare lay a hand on North Korea" but made no direct connection between the Pueblo incident and the US involvement in Vietnam.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Hanoi Asks US Peace Activist to Receive Freed US Pilots: Dave Dellinger, editor of the magazine Liberation, issued a statement in Boston yesterday saying he had been asked by Hanoi to send a representative to North Vietnam for "discussion and reception" of the three pilots the North Vietnamese claimed on 27 January would be released. Dellinger, who has been involved in antiwar activity in the US and who has twice traveled to North Vietnam, was involved in the release of three US prisoners by the Viet Cong in Cambodia last November. This is the first indication that Hanoi has taken any steps toward arranging the actual release of the three pilots. There has been no additional information on when and where they will be freed.

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